

**Amendments to the Specification:**

At page one, after the title and before the first sentence, please insert the following paragraph:

--This application is a continuation of International Patent Application Serial number PCT/NL02/00102, filed February 18, 2002; which claims priority from European patent application number 01200587.2, filed February 19, 2001; and from European patent application number 01202062.4, filed May 30, 2001; all of which are hereby incorporated herein by reference.--

After page 21, on new page 22, please insert the following abstract:

**--ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

The invention is directed to a method of preparing porous metals, as well as to these porous metals *per se*. More in particular, the invention is directed to the use of these porous metals in the preparation of medical items, such as implants. The invention further relates to a method of providing a porous metal coating on a substrate, in particular, on the surface of a medical item such as an implant or scaffold for tissue engineering. According to the method of the invention, a polymeric foam is impregnated with a slurry of metal particles, such as titanium, tantalum, titanium alloy or tantalum alloy particles. The impregnated foam is subsequently dried and subjected to pyrolysis and subsequent sintering. Due to the presence of metal hydrides, the formation of undesired compounds, such as metal oxides or nitrides, is avoided.--